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## **IS POPULISM A THREAT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY OR ITS CORRECTIVE MECHANISM?**

*Jogilė Stašienė*

While the success of populist political parties has been increasing in Western Europe, politicians are becoming more concerned with the populist threat for representative democracy. However, scholars of populism have different perspectives on what influence the populism might have on representative democracy. The article attempts to answer the question of why one group of populism theorists understand populism as incompatible with representative democracy, and others interpret it as a corrective for democracy. In order to answer the question, it has been analysed how two opposing groups of populism scholars define populism, representative democracy, and how they conceptualise the relationship between them.

## **HOW SHOULD WE DISCUSS SMALL STATES? ANALYSING THE DEFINITIONS OF SMALLNESS**

*Justinas Lingėvičius*

The study aims to explain the ways to discuss about small states and their foreign and security policy. Most of the academic publications dedicated to analyse the definition of a small state provide different definitions based on different theories of International Relations, which also include various explanations on how size determines the behavior of a small state. These generalised explanations seem to be very limited because they are

not able to give a clear understanding of why the so-called small states exercise different foreign and security policy. Therefore, another view point is chosen – to analyse the ways how states understand their *smallness* and what meanings define this category of size. The research is based on poststructuralism in International Relations. Two chosen cases – Lithuania and New Zealand – prove that despite the fact that both countries are understood as small, the perception of *smallness* and its relevance are very different. Five sizes (physical, normative, political, sovereignty and perception), used as a methodological tool, show that various meanings of being a small country are affected not only by physical size. Other factors, such as the geopolitical situation, historical memory, experience and attitude towards the international system, should be taken into consideration while analysing small states and their foreign and security policy. A reflection of being a small country also shows that smallness is a political concept. Therefore, orthodox questions on what are the small states and how they behave can be changed to another one: how countries choose to be small and what they do with the different narratives of smallness.

**A STATE SMALLER THAN ITS TERRITORY:  
STRUGGLES OVER IDENTITY AND LOYALTY ON  
THE SOUTHEASTERN BORDERLAND OF LITHUANIA**

*Marija Norkūnaitė*

This article examines the political situation on the Southeastern borderland of Lithuania. Due to the ethnic composition of the population, the one-party rule by the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania and a tense relationship with the central government, it is often referred to as the “Fortress” of Lithuanian Poles. However, a deeper look into the context reveals that the problem is far more complicated than the matter of ethnicity. Rather, it raises questions about people’s loyalty to the state and their identification with it. On that account, the aim of this study is to find out what actors are engaged in the struggles over power on the Southeastern borderland of Lithuania and what mechanisms are being used to hinder the state from spreading a uniform

national identity on its border regions. A study conducted in Šalčininkai allows to identify the main actors, establishing an alternative system of meaning and restricting the capacity of the state to spread a unitary identity; also, it reveals the control mechanism used by the local actors, comprising two categories of measures: (1) administrative-material capacities; (2) symbolic resources.

**AGE ORIENTATION OF WELFARE STATES  
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:  
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLAND AND HUNGARY**

*Raimonda Mackevičiūtė*

This article analyses age orientation of welfare states in CEE countries. In the context of the current demographic changes, how the welfare states address the risks faced by people at different stages in the life course affects both citizens' lives and the capacity of national economies to adapt to new conditions. For this reason, it is becoming more and more important to evaluate what different welfare states do to ensure welfare of their elderly and young citizens. With few exceptions, there is very little comparative evidence on the age orientation of social policies in OECD countries – and none in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) countries. Age orientation of welfare states in this region is analysed for the first time in this article. Age orientation is measured by calculating the Elderly/Children Spending Ratio (ECSR). It discloses significant differences of social policies' age orientation among CEE countries. Two of the most exceptional cases are Poland and Hungary. The welfare state's age orientation of these similar countries is completely different. The social policy of Poland is elderly- oriented, while the social policy of Hungary is youth- oriented. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explain what determines the differences of the welfare states age orientation in Poland and Hungary.